

Back to the board

1. Choose a number of words that you want the class to revise.
 2. Place a chair in front of the board facing the class (so that it faces away from the board).
 3. Ask one of the students to sit in the chair (with their back to the board).
Write one of the words on the board.
 4. The task is for the other students to explain the word on the board (using English) to the student sitting in the chair.
 5. Their task is to guess the word.
 6. Repeat the activity with the other words choosing a different student (to sit in the chair) each time.
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Added value

1. Put the class into two teams (for large classes make more teams).
 2. Explain that you will give the students a 3 letter word and the teams will take turns to add letters creating longer words.
 3. They can rearrange the letters, but must use all the letters + 1.
 4. You might want to demonstrate the activity e.g. EAR; Team 1 = REAL; Team 2 = LATER; Team 1 = TALLER etc.
 5. Teams continue to take turns until one team can no longer make a word.
 6. To keep the game flowing you might want to set a time limit of 1 minute per turn.
 7. You may also want to make the game more competitive by scoring. The team that win each round get the same number of points as letters in their word.
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Chain words

1. Sit your students in a circle (if possible – otherwise make sure that everyone knows who they follow).
 2. The first student says a word; the next student must say a word beginning with the last letter of the previous word etc.
 3. You might want to give a visual demonstration on the board
i.e. Class -> School -> Leg -> Girl -> Lion -> Nut -> Teacher -> Route -> End -> D
....
 4. Keep it snappy by giving very short time limits to think of a word. If a student can't think of a word they must move their chair back and are 'out'. Also, words are not allowed to be repeated. The winner is the last student in (but don't play for too long).
 5. If you want you could say that all the words need to be connected to a topic i.e. Food.
Apple -> Egg -> Grapes -> Soup -> Peach etc.
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What's the group? (1)

Students are used to putting words in groups, but often the groupings or categories are too obvious. For more advanced students make the activity trickier by having unusual groupings. e.g. What's the link (topic) for these words: Chip, Slice, Nutmeg, Chop.

Some students might say 'Kitchen' but it could also be 'Football' (A chip(n) is when the ball is lifted over someone's head using the foot, A slice (n) when the ball is miss kicked, To nutmeg (v) is when the ball is kicked through a players legs and the player who kicked the ball runs around the other player and carries on playing with the ball, and, To chop (v) is when one player kicks another player causing them to fall down. Think of a few groupings of your own and then ask the students to think of some of their own.

What's the group? (2)

1. Choose a topic and write down around 8 words linked to that topic (starting with the harder, or more obscure, ones working up to the more obvious).
 2. Read the words out one by one and see who can guess the topic first.
 3. To make it more competitive put the students into teams and award points depending on how quickly they guess the topic.
 4. An example of this activity might be: Boot, Stick, Lights, Belt, Steer, Wheels, Petrol, Drive. = Car or Vehicle.
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Homograph clues

1. You need to think of your words and clues before the class but otherwise there are no materials (either dictate the clues or write them up on the board).
 2. Think of words that are homographs and then 'write' (or think of a clue for the different meanings).
 3. The students need to guess the word. e.g. Part of a tree. [Bark] The noise a dog makes. Where you put your baggage in an American car [Trunk] An elephant's nose.
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Words that go together

1. Choose some words which either collocate or create compounds.
 2. Make sure that each word has three or four collocates or compounds.
 3. Put your students into teams (groups).
 4. Read out (or write on the board) one ½ of the collocation or compound.
 5. Each group now has one turn to guess the 'key' word.
 6. If nobody guesses, give the next word (clue) and guess again.
e.g. Light ____.
____ work.
____ wife.
Detached _____.
Key word = House.
 7. Note: some words will collocate with many words, but tell your students you are looking for one that collocates with all the words on your list).
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Who am I?

1. Each student needs a blank piece of paper.
 2. Ask them to write the following: an adjective they think describes themselves; an adjective other people might use to describe them; an adjective that is totally opposite to what they are like.
 3. Ask the students NOT to tell anyone what they are writing.
 4. Collect in the pieces of paper.
 5. Randomly read out the adjectives from the pieces of paper and see if the students can guess who is being described.
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Wrong word

1. Choose a number of sentences which contain a word that doesn't really fit (a good source for these is your students' own writing).
2. Write each sentence up on the board.
3. Ask the students to work in pairs or groups. Their task is to discuss each sentence, find the wrong word and replace it with the correct one, e.g:

He kissed her on her laps. (lips).
They war some nice new clothes. (wore).
You need to take a jump of faith. (leap).

Onomatopoeia

1. Either write up (on the board) or read out a few words that are onomatopoeic e.g. Buzz, Fizz, Wow! Thud, Grrrr, Psst! etc.
 2. Ask the students to think of what is 'happening' for each word i.e. Buzz = a doorbell ringing.
 3. After they have written down their ideas get them to discuss these in groups (or as a class).
 4. As an extension activity you can ask the students to write a short story (or skit) using the words and connections.
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A simple warmer/lesson filler to practise colours, forms and materials.

1. Write down a colour, a form and a material on the board e.g.

yellow, round, plastic

green, oval, wood

pink, flat, silk

2. Ask students to write down five possible objects under each section.
3. If possible, ask students to find objects with two or all three of these qualities. It's amazing to see what interesting objects your students suggest.

A fun team exercise for revising vocabulary.

- Put students into small groups of 3 or 4 and ask one from each group to draw a picture of a horse on a spare piece of paper.
- Draw some hurdles on the board from left to right with a starting and finishing block at each end of the board. Take the drawings of the horses and stick them up from top to bottom at the starting block.
- Ask the vocab you have been learning that week and get students to hit the table (or make a noise) when they know the answers. When a team gets an answer correct they jump one hurdle. The game ends when the first horse gets to the finishing line.
- Great for motivating a class to learn vocab.

Pyramid

All you need for it is some paper, a pen and a stopwatch (or the second hand of a watch).

- Divide the class into teams of two contestants. The object of the game is for these contestants to describe seven words from a vocabulary category to their partner within a time-limit. The category could be anything; for example, for my latest game of Pyramid I chose, amongst others, the following: things you can make, the cinema, in a woman's bag and things that can be broken.
 - Players take it in turns to choose a category, and the teacher gives the player the seven words which he must describe to his partner in English. He is given thirty seconds to do this, and gets a point for each word his partner guesses within this time limit. Depending on the size of the group, give each player a couple of turns at describing words, then add the scores of the pairs to find out which is the winner.
 - The rules are fairly simple: no root words (e.g. if the word is headache, no using the word head) and descriptions only in English. The game also tends to work better without excessive use of gesture!
 - This is a warmer pretty suitable to any level; with lower levels categories like cinema can be used to check simple vocabulary (popcorn, seat, ticket etc.), but with higher levels you can use the game to look at collocations. For example, in the category things that can be broken I've chosen washing machine, heart, rule, lift, habit, stereotype and record; similarly, there are many diverse things which you can make in English!
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Vocabulary Bag

1. Write down a selection of words the students have learned during the term on pieces of card and put them in a bag.
2. Ask the students to sit in a circle. Stand outside the circle and control the tape recorder / CD player.
3. Play the tape / CD. As music plays, ask the students to pass around the vocabulary bag.
4. Stop the tape / CD at intervals during the song.
5. When the music stops playing, the student who has the bag has to select a word from the bag and define the word to the other students.
6. The student who guesses the word keeps the card and the game continues.

The person who has the most cards at the end wins! If the student doesn't know how to define the word, it can be replaced with another or put back in the bag. Obviously the latter isn't a good idea when there are only a few words left

Memory game

A team exercise to practise adjectives (opposites), phrasal verbs, family relations, etc. which the students have learned throughout the term.

1. Draw a 4x4 grid up on the board, and number the columns A, B, C, D and the rows 1, 2, 3, 4. Write one adjective from each pair in each square.

	A	B	C	D
1	beautiful	rich	intelligent	expensive
2	good	dangerous	interesting	pretty
3	alive	careful	generous	happy
4	young	funny	quiet	healthy

2. Divide the class in two teams, A and B. Explain they are not allowed to write anything during this game, and can only rely on their memory.
3. Team A calls out the co-ordinates for a square (B-3 for example).
4. Team B have to call out the opposite adjective to the one in the square.
5. If Team B guess the opposite adjective correctly, they gain a point. If they are unsuccessful, Team A have an opportunity to guess the opposite adjective.
6. Swap roles. Team B call out the co-ordinates and Team A guess the opposite adjective